1/15/77

Mr. Bernard Fensterwald
1707 H St., NW, 10th floor
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Bud,

You have not returned what I leaned you for Tip O'Neill. I also have not heard from you. I would prefer not to have to worry about the loss of any of this kind of material or even if it is lost. You were to have made copies before letting any of it out of your hands. If you have, fine. If you still have any use, fine, keep it as long as you do. However, the limited purpose for which you requested it appears to exist no longer.

If you have this and have no further need, please give it to Jim when you see him instead of mailing it. I'll be in D.C. when the weather is less uncongenial to my travelling and I can pick it up then.

If I did not tell you - and others did not - I have had nothing to do with the committee for a long time. I anticipate no change. If Sprague leaves, which in spite of his obvious ambition would not surprise me, what forces me to have nothing to do with them would not be eliminated now.

It should be obvious that I have taken no public steps or initiatives. Few have sought me out and I have solicited none. I prefer it this way. However, this whole thing has degenerated very badly, to the point where I felt I did have to make a move on my own. I did it by mail, to a stranger who has not had time to react. If he does.

Having taken no other initiatives does not mean that I will not. Having heard from few, none in the Congress, does not mean that I will not. If I do, despite a popular mythology to which I have heard you subscribe, I'll not be surprised if they are conservatives. If we have common interests as usual I will do what I can to serve them.

What brings this to mind is a fat batch of clippings in today's mail. They tell an incredible story. Sprague may be a real hot prosecutor but if he has elemental political savvy outside cruddy ward politics or the remotest concept of investigating despite the Yablonski case I'm Adonis. Given the other circumstances this really means a choice of disasters. That I am responsible for none and foresaw the others is scant comfort.

You did not tell me of any interest you have other than Gonzalez. I did not ask when you did not volunteer. When just about everyone else wanted me out at the time I should not have been out and when I had no personal interest in being anywhere in particular I suffered no personal loss in staying to myself. Besides, if I fought all the nuts and self-seekers I would have to devote all my time to that.

As of now if I had my druthers it would be for this committee to end before it can do more harm. The only alternative not certain to be harmful is unlikely, a drastic overhaul of committee and staff. This, I regret, is inevitable when the pot is boiled without regard to the burning when it boils over.

From your silence I presume you have done nothing with Zebra. I also have heard nothing, directly or indirectly.

My concern about the material I leaned you is not recovering it . But I would like to know that at some point I will.

Sincerely,